



**Urban League of  
Metropolitan Seattle**

*Empowering Communities.  
Changing Lives.*

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January 13, 2010

Chairman Julius Genachowski  
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn  
Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell

Re: Broadband Industry Practices

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners:

The creation of the National Broadband Plan, in our minds, must remain the Commission's highest and singular policy priority at this time because it is through the Plan that the nation can at last close the digital divide and bring broadband to all Americans. In particular, as Congress has mandated pursuant to the ARRA's broadband provisions, ensuring 100% access and adoption is the next great challenge for our nation, and particularly the communities we represent.

As organizations that serve communities that are among the most severely impacted by a lack of access to technology, we urge you to keep your number one focus on the need to get everyone connected. We are concerned that some of the proposed regulations on the Internet could, as applied, inhibit the goal of universal access and leave disenfranchised communities further behind. We are also concerned that some proposed regulations could inhibit investments being made by companies employing hundreds of thousands of workers and connecting millions to the opportunities that broadband technology affords to those in our community – from telemedicine to distance learning to applying for jobs online.

The core concept of an open Internet, operated transparently, is highly desirable and we support it wholeheartedly. But the nation cannot afford to get this wrong!

Therefore, the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking ought to include the framework and a request for comment that would produce a careful and empirical analysis of the impact that these regulations would have on people with disabilities, low-income, minority, multilingual, elderly and young Americans. The Commission needs to ensure that net neutrality would not delay bridging the digital divide by altering consumer prices and discouraging broadband adoption and deployment. We would hope that nothing in the NPRM reflects presumed conclusions until such an analysis is complete.

Sincerely,

James Kelly  
President & CEO  
Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle